



# City of Seattle

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Freight  
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April 3, 2016

The Honorable Anthony Foxx  
Office of the Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Re.: City of Seattle – South Lander Street Grade Separation FAST Grant Application

The Seattle Freight  
Advisory Board shall  
advise the City Council,  
the Mayor, and all  
departments and offices  
of the City in  
development of a  
functional and efficient  
freight system and on all  
matters related to freight  
and the impact that  
actions by the City may  
have upon the freight  
environment.

City Council Resolution  
31243

Dear Secretary Foxx:

I am writing to you as a Member and Vice Chairman of the City of Seattle Freight Transport Advisory Board in the matter of the expedited application by the City of Seattle for funding to construct the South Lander Street Grade Separation and Railroad Safety Project under the U.S. Department of Transportation's FAST Grant Application Program.

It is proposed to construct a new rail-road grade separation overpass for South Lander Street to go over the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) main north-south Pacific Northwest railroad line between First and Fourth Avenues to the immediate south of downtown Seattle for both operational and safety reasons as well as for environmental improvements.

The proposed rail-road grade separation will provide for a major unimpeded roadway crossing of the railroad line in a manner which also eliminates the potential for motor vehicle collisions and interference with railroad freight and passenger operations.

Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 3800, PO Box 34996, Seattle, WA 98124-4996

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Web: [www.seattle.gov/sfab/](http://www.seattle.gov/sfab/)

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These trains operate on a main line which is used by up to 70 BNSF Railway freight trains with over 3,000 cars per day plus as many as 30 Amtrak intercity, Washington DOT Cascades corridor and Sound Transit commuter trains on a daily basis while there are as many as 12,000 automobiles and 3,000 trucks on an average daily basis.

The end results of the major road and rail traffic impacted by the present surface grade crossing at South Lander Street are up to 4.5 hours of roadway vehicle delay with more than 500 roadway safety violations on an average day along with time delays and safety concerns which also adversely impact passenger and freight train operations.

The construction of the South Lander Street grade separation will act to greatly improve transportation mobility for a large number of people plus major freight movements within the SODO (South of the Dome) area immediately south of downtown Seattle as well as to and from the adjacent operations of the Port of Seattle and the local manufacturing operations adjacent to South Lander Street.

The construction of the South Lander Street rail-road grade separation project to the south of downtown Seattle will contribute to maintaining the stability of and estimated 75,000 existing jobs and facilitate the creation of 25,000 future jobs by 2040 as a considerable benefit to the Puget Sound area.

The construction of the South Lander Street grade separation project is expected to result in improved freight and passenger train movements to the south of downtown Seattle on a major railway lines as well as to significantly reduce traffic delays for truck, car and bus roadway movements while improving access to the Port of Seattle and the local industrial areas.

The construction of the South Lander Street rail-road grade separation project is expected to leverage previous and present roadway and railroad infrastructure investments by the Federal, State and Local governments which include more than \$800 million in high speed rail investments in the State of Washington as well as previous Amtrak facility improvement projects at the King Street Coach Yard and Locomotive Maintenance Facility.

The construction of the South Lander Street rail-road grade separation project will improve passenger access to regional transit hubs and terminals and employment centers while enhancing freight access for trucks and trains while promoting improved access to the adjacent Interstate 5 and 90 freeway corridors.

The construction of the South Lander Street rail-road crossing will significantly lower the air pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions because of reduced vehicle delays and idling while improving the safety for drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists in the area to the south of downtown Seattle.

For all of the above reasons, I am asking you to support the request by the City of Seattle for Federal FAST fund in the approximate amount of \$55,000,000 as a critical component of the estimated total construction cost of \$140,000,000 for the South Lander Street Grade Separation and Railroad Safety Project.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions with regard to any of the statements made and information provided in this letter with regard to the South Lander Street Grade Separation and Railroad Safety Project in support of the expedited request for funding by the City of Seattle.

Respectfully submitted;

  
Hal B. H. Cooper, Jr.

CC.: Mayor Edward Murray  
Mr. Scott Kubly  
U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell  
U.S. Senator Patty Murray  
U.S. Congressman Jim McDermott  
Washington Governor Jay Inslee  
Mr. Warren Aakewik, Chairman